



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 25, 2008

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Forestry Commission Sends Firefighters to Texas

Jackson, Miss.—On June 20 the Mississippi Forestry Commission dispatched an eight-member firefighting Strike Team to Texas to help with wildfire suppression efforts. Texas has been experiencing extreme wildfire behavior and activity for several months.

“We sent the strike team in response to a request from fire officials with the Texas Forest Service,” said Charlie Morgan, State Forester of the Mississippi Forestry Commission. “The team’s mission is to provide assistance to volunteer fire departments working the areas of Fredericksburg and Childers.” A typical assignment lasts two weeks.

The eight-member team consists of three Type-Six Fire Engines with operators and two strike team leaders. A Type-Six Engine is a one-ton truck equipped with a 150-gallon water tank and pumping system. This type of firefighting equipment is lightweight and designed for rapid response to grass and brush fires and is also used in mop up operations once a fire is contained.

Serving on the strike team are Tracy Lofton (Clay County), Mitchell Whatley (Covington Co.), Johnny Keys (Covington Co.), Gregory Rolison (Stone Co.), Brian Williamson (Stone Co.), Kevin Crosby (Franklin Co.), Lane Anders (Franklin Co.), and Jonthan Freeman (Wayne Co.).

According to Morgan, the wildfire danger in Mississippi is currently low due to routine and scattered rains over the past few weeks, thereby allowing the Forestry Commission to dispatch firefighters and equipment out of state. “However, the public should always use extreme caution when conducting any type of outdoor burning, including the use of fireworks,” warns Morgan.

The Mississippi Forestry Commission and other states’ forestry agencies honor an agreement to provide assistance to each other during times of critical need, such as the case in Texas with the extreme wildfire activity. Texas will reimburse expenses, such as fuel and personnel time, incurred by Mississippi and other states providing firefighting assistance.

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